

Department of Public Health  
and Human Services

Section:  
NON-FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

Subject:  
Social Security Number

**Supersedes:** FS 303-1 (11/01/00)

**References:** 7 CFR 273.6, 273.11(b)(7)(5)

GENERAL RULE -- A household participating or applying for participation in the Food Stamp Program must provide the Social Security number (SSN) for each household member or *verify the member has applied* for one before the eligibility determination. If individuals have more than one number, all numbers must be furnished.

The Department of Public Health and Human Services is authorized to use SSNs in the administration of the Food Stamp Program in accordance with federal regulations.

#### **SSN FOR PARTICIPATING HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**

Individuals wanting to participate in the Food Stamp Program who do not have a SSN, do not know if they have one, or are unable to find one, must apply for a SSN with the Social Security Administration (SSA). Proof of Proof of application for a SSN from SSA is required before the initial eligibility determination. Generally, the SSA uses the Receipt for Application for a Social Security Number, Form SSA-5028, as proof an individual applied for a SSN.

If the household is unable to provide proof of application for a SSN for a newborn, the household must provide the SSN or proof of application at its next redetermination or within six months following the month the baby is born, whichever is later. If the household is unable to provide a SSN or proof of application for a SSN within those time frames, the OPA Case Manager will determine if good cause is applicable.

Generally, the SSN application process is begun while the mother is still in the hospital. If a SSN application is made for a newborn prior to the mother leaving the hospital, the application for a SSN from the hospital is acceptable verification.

#### **≥GOOD CAUSE**

The OPA Case Manager considers information from the household, the SSA, and any information the OPA may have to determine if good cause exists for an individual not applying for or providing a SSN.

Good cause exists if documentary or collateral information shows that the household member has applied for a SSN, **and** the individual has made every effort to provide the SSA with the necessary information to complete an application for the SSN.

When the household or someone acting on its behalf has a **sincere religious objection** to providing a SSN or applying for a SSN, all household members may participate in the program if otherwise eligible.

Good cause does not include delays due to illness, lack of transportation or temporary absences. The SSA makes provisions for mail-in applications in lieu of applying in person.

If the household member can show good cause why an application for a SSN has not been completed in a timely manner, that person is allowed to participate for one month in addition to the month of application. If the household member applying for a SSN has been unable to obtain the documents required by SSA, the OPA Case Manager makes every effort to assist in obtaining these documents. Good cause for failure to apply for a SSN must be shown monthly in order for the household member to continue to participate. Once an application has been filed, the household member continues to participate pending notification of the member's SSN.

#### **SSN INELIGIBLE**

If a household member does not apply without good cause for a SSN or does not provide their SSN, that individual is ineligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program. The disqualification applies to the individual for whom the SSN is not provided and not to the entire household.

The disqualified individual is coded 'DS' on the FS SEPA screen.

#### **ENDING DISQUALIFICATION TEAMS**

A disqualified household member may establish eligibility by providing a SSN or verifying the member has applied for one. SSNs are entered on TEAMS SSDO screen. The OPA Case Manager enters the appropriate verification code ('CS'- client statement, 'VV'- visually viewed, or 'HC'- hard copy). The number is verified through a computer interface with SSA and TEAMS, and the verification code is updated to 'AG'- agency interface.

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